



# Historian's Bulletin



May 2019

Greetings Municipal Historians!

Definitely for me, as well as others that I have talked to, the winter dragged on way too long and I'm so looking forward to warmer weather and sunshine.

So much has happened over the course of this year – some with tragic consequences. Our work family at the Dept. of History & Archives and our colleagues in the Board of Elections (across the hall) were touched by tragedy with the devastating limousine accident in Schoharie on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>. We all continue to pray for the families that lost loved ones as they pick up the pieces and move forward.



There are a number of anniversaries coming up in the next five years on all levels – local, state and national history. 2019 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NYS Local Government Historians' appointments as well as the 235<sup>th</sup> anniversary of when Tryon County was renamed becoming Montgomery County. Next year in 2020 we will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote. In 2021, we will celebrate the 185<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Old Courthouse here in Fonda. We will honor the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Tryon County in 2022, while 2023 will be the year for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the creations of the Towns of Root and Glen. Stay tuned for details as events and programming will be forthcoming to celebrate all of these anniversaries.

Last August, I was invited, along with Steve Helmin, to tour the former opera house in the Donaldson Block in Fultonville as well as the magnificent Starin Place. The Preservation League of New York State added opera houses to their list of "Seven to Save" and through the



wonderful work of Bruce Harvey, they have created a photo exhibit that will be coming to the Old Courthouse. The exhibit will be displayed in the first floor hallway of the Old Courthouse for the month of August and we will be having an opening reception to welcome everyone to see the extraordinary photographs taken by Mr. Harvey. The opening reception will be held here at the Old Courthouse on Friday evening, August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019 from 5:30 to 7pm. There will be light refreshments for those who come to view the exhibit. More details will follow as the time gets closer.

As always, please let me know if there are specific topics that you would like to see covered at some of our historians' meetings.

Kelly Yacobucci Farquhar, Montgomery County Historian/RMO

## Notes from Historians' meeting 9/27/18 - Kilts Farm, Stone Arabia

**Attendees:** Kelly Farquhar (Mont Co. Historian), Dennis Malcolm (Ames), Lorraine Whiting (Town of Charleston), Bill Maring (Town of Root), Mat Rapacz (St. Johnsville), John Tokarowski (Hagaman), Steve Helmin (Town of Glen), Pete Couser (Fort Plain Museum) and Margaret Schlotzhauer & Skip Barshied (Co-Historians, Town of Palatine).

**Women's Suffrage:** New York State created a Women's Suffrage Commission to honor the centennial of women's suffrage marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2017-2020) from the women's vote in New York State (1917) through the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920. Kelly attended the County & Borough Historians workshop in Albany in August where it was presented that Carol Kammen & Sara Johnson (Tompkins & Putnam County Historians) have been looking to add to the state story with local information. Please let them know if anyone locally is presenting on women's suffrage, doing research, hosting events, etc. and it will also be publicized on the NYS Historian's website.

**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the local historians' law:** The New York State Arts & Cultural Affairs law §57.07 required the appointment of a local historian for every town and village in the state in 1919. The law also advocates for the appointment of a county historian. Currently there are 1,641 municipal historians serving in New York State.

**Doing research – what are useful resources and looking at primary vs. secondary sources:** We talked about the type of records that are useful in doing local history research. Many records can be found at local repositories such as historical societies, county clerk's offices, as well as town and village clerk offices. Land records, maps, newspapers, incorporation papers for business and churches, highway records, and town/village meeting minutes can all be utilized for local history.

When looking at validity or accuracy of records in doing local history research, primary sources are first-hand accounts of a topic while secondary sources are any account of something that is not a primary source. Original documents such as diaries, meeting minutes, muster rolls, journals, eyewitness accounts, or anything documented at the time an event occurred is considered to be primary source material. That is, published research, newspaper articles and other media written about a topic at a later time are typically considered secondary sources. Secondary sources can, however, cite both primary sources and other secondary sources.

**Historic Markers list:** Pomeroy Foundation has an application deadline of Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 for its "Legends & Lore" series of historic markers. They have also announced a new series of markers, the "1779 Sullivan – Clinton Campaign" marker grant program commemorating the 250 anniversary of the Sullivan-Clinton march with historic roadside markers through 2029. As with all of their markers, Pomeroy requests primary source documentation for the text as it is to be written on the marker. The markers should document our history by putting it in the historical context within the estimated knowledge of historical tourists (i.e. general public) and/or 4<sup>th</sup> graders. For example, dates are helpful such as "1861-1865" rather than simply saying something occurred at the time of the Civil War because a 4<sup>th</sup> grader or the general public does not necessarily know the exact dates the Civil War occurred.



### Historian Go-Around:

**Dennis** reported that both Ames churches had an event in August with approximately 70 people attending. The second weekend that month, the Museum hosted a reunion of alumni from the Ames School. The day started like a normal school day with the bell ringing, Pledge of Allegiance, singing songs, and attendees ate lunch under the trees. They have

handwritten records of each former student's history. Also, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in September was the Summers' End Festival where 30 vendors participated along with a 5K run. The first Wednesday in December will be the lighting of the Christmas tree.

**Bill** reported that Susan Miller talked about dowsing for graves at a recent meeting of the Root Historical Society. She uses a pendulum and has successfully discovered graves in Cherry Valley where they were not known to be.

**Mat** received an inquiry from a professor at Kent State regarding the invention of the whooping cough vaccine. Pearl Kendrick taught school in St. Johnsville and served as Principal from 1914-1918. She was credited as a co-inventor of the vaccine to prevent whooping cough or pertussis.

**Steve** forwarded an email from the Preservation League of New York State regarding existing opera houses to Karen Chaplin, owner of the Donaldson Block and Starin Place in Fultonville. Preservation League has highlighted these former opera houses on their "7 to Save" list for historic preservation efforts. As part of this nomination, an architectural photographer was sent out to take images and document the Donaldson Block opera house and on a separate occasion, a group including Steve, Kelly and representatives from the Preservation League toured not only the opera house but also Starin Place.

**Rob C.** recently came into possession of Jacob Crouse (1769-1819) gravestone where it was found at a home in Mindenville that was abandoned after the flood and later acquired by the Town of Minden. The stone is about knee height & white-ish marble in color with some chips

### **SAVE THE DATE!!**

#### **Minden History Fair**

Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019,

Haslett Park (across from Stewart's) under the big tent, Fort Plain, NY.

and discoloration. Crouse may have been interred first at Sand Hill and possibly re-interred at Mount Hope Cemetery in Fordsbush where the Crouse family has a large plot. However, there is only a large monument with Jacob & wife Catherine's names on one side and some children on the others, no separate stones. Rob has found some information on Find-A-Grave and he is interested in putting the stone where it belongs.

**Lorraine** discussed the events for Charleston's 22th Anniversary celebration. There were 6-8 people on the planning committee. A large Memorial Day parade commemorated the anniversary along with a free picnic accompanied by fireworks. Also, the town purchased a historic marker on the origins of the town's name which was erected with a reenactment from the Tryon County Militia as part of the unveiling ceremony. Congressman Tonko, Senator Amedore and Assemblyman Santabarbara all participated with proclamations for the town. Also significant this year was that the town paid to have all historic markers repainted by a local

### **SAVE THE DATE!!** **Ames' Summers End Festival**

Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> 2019

35 vendors, 5K Run & more –

Come see what the fun is all about in NYS's smallest incorporated village!

[www.amesmuseum.weebly.com](http://www.amesmuseum.weebly.com) (518) 673-5820

resident who did an extraordinary job. The Christian Church at the Four Corners replaced the steeple and will be having a dedication ceremony on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> and all the windows were replaced in the Baptist Church.

**Margaret** mows the lawn for the Trinity Lutheran Church in Stone Arabia and before she died, Helen Nellis asked Margaret to locate the graves of three children supposed to be buried in the cemetery behind the church. Happily, Margaret reported that she found the graves last year in the brush has is currently doing what she can to clean them up.

**Skip** discussed the Fort Klock re-enactment coming up on the 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> of September. The Fort has worked with a local teacher to bring kids to learn about rural schoolhouses. Additionally, they received a grant from the Yerdon Foundation to obtain a non-working outhouse.

**Bev** will be conducting a Fonda history tour on Sunday, Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> from 1-4pm where attendees will meet on Park Street.

**Kelly** was busy over the last few months presenting to Historic Amsterdam League (HAL) and the Canajoharie Seniors group on Montgomery County's Civil War nurse, Ann Maria Schram. She also presented and put in an exhibit with the Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State on Montgomery County's role in the Underground Railroad and Abolitionist movement at the New York State Fair. In September, she conducted a walking tour of Canajoharie, as part of Arkell Museum's programming, on the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism and African American life in that community.



*Please send me information about the work that you are doing as a public historian in Montgomery County and I'll include it in upcoming newsletters. We love to share with each other the progress and success of our projects, as well as any difficulties. You can either send me a little note in the mail or by email to [kfarquhar@co.montgomery.ny.us](mailto:kfarquhar@co.montgomery.ny.us).*

Next meeting scheduled for 10:00am on Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019 at Dept. of History & Archives, Old Courthouse, 9 Park St., Fonda, NY. If you've never been to an historians' meeting before, we would love to see you there! Please RSVP to (518) 853-8186 or email [kfarquhar@co.montgomery.ny.us](mailto:kfarquhar@co.montgomery.ny.us).

**MOHAWK VALLEY REGION**  
**PATH THROUGH HISTORY**  
Start Your Path -- THE MOHAWK VALLEY REGION PATH THROUGH HISTORY  
<https://www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com/>

*Coming Soon*  
**TRAVELSTORYS**  
CYCLE THE ERIE CANAL Presented by Montgomery County  
A path through history along the Erie Canal from St. Johnsville, NY to Amsterdam, NY.



Listen to the newest podcast which explores the story of New York State and the unique tales of New Yorkers.



Hosted by New York State Historian Devin Lander and Don Wildman, host of the Travel Channel's "Mysteries at the Museum."

*The Friends of Schoharie Crossing Spring 2019 newsletter reports that a new nature and walking trail will be developed connecting the Yankee Hill Lock with the south side of Amsterdam.*

*John Naple, Treasurer of the Friends of Schoharie Crossing, has been working with Schoharie Crossing site manager Janice Fontanella, the Parks and Trails NY, NYS Parks, and the NYS Canal Corporation to define trail boundaries for the Adopt-A-Trail program.*

*Volunteers will begin working on clearing the trail this spring.*

### Upcoming Events

- **APHNYS Region 7 historians' meeting** – Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> 2019, 9am-3:30pm, Richfield Springs Public Library, NYS Hwy. 20, Richfield Springs, NY. Presentations on how historians can use local historical materials & resources to fit into the state social studies curriculum, Richfield Springs history, identifying & mapping graves at the Cherry Valley cemetery, and prominent women in late 19<sup>th</sup> c. southern Herkimer County who made notable achievements; catered lunch, etc. Cost is \$13.00 for registration & handouts (\$5.00) and lunch (\$8.00). Send checks payable to APHNYS to Dick Williams, Region 7 Coordinator, 1 Mulberry St., Clinton, NY 13323. For more questions, contact Dick at (315) 853-5018 or [apulia@verizon.net](mailto:apulia@verizon.net).
- **23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rhubarb Festival** – Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, 11am-4pm, 1747 Nellis Tavern, NYS Route 5 east of St. Johnsville, NY. Rhubarb Pie baking contest at 12 noon, prizes at 1:00pm. Battenkill String Band 1:00-3:00pm. Tours of the tavern. For sale while available will be Rhubarb items, lunch, fresh rhubarb, cookbook, and stencils. For further information call Mary Davis at (315) 866-2619, [www.PalatineSettlementSociety.org](http://www.PalatineSettlementSociety.org), or see 1747 Nellis Tavern on Facebook.
- **The Fort Plain Museum's 5th Annual American Revolution Mohawk Valley Conference** -- June 6-9, 2019. The American Revolution Mohawk Valley Conference celebrates its 5th year with more speakers and an early sign-up special. Pre-registration is required. The early sign-up special is \$10 off if you sign-up by May 7, 2019. Please visit our website <http://www.fortplainmuseum.com/conference>. We do have a few seats left for each of the bus tours, call 518-774-5669 for details
- **"Hidden in Plain Sight" art exhibition opening reception** – Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, 5:30-7pm, Old Courthouse, 9 Park St., Fonda, NY. Exhibition of the Preservation League of New York's "Seven to Save" designees with photographs taken by Bruce Harvey, a consulting professional historian and documentation photographer based in Syracuse. Featured in the exhibition is the opera house in Fultonville's Donaldson Block and the aqueduct at Schoharie Crossing in Fort Hunter. The exhibit will be on display in the first floor lobby of the old Courthouse for the month of August. The opening reception will have refreshments and is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact the Dept. of History & Archives at (518) 853-8186.
- **SummerFest events in the Mohawk Valley** – June, July & August 2019 – Tavern nights and festivals at various historic sites in Montgomery County. Check out Mohawk Country on Facebook and stay tuned for further details as the time approaches.

# Teddy Roosevelt used auto to campaign through valley

by Mat Rapacz, Historian, Town & Village of St. Johnsville

On October 12, 1914, one of the most dynamic politicians in American history, Theodore Roosevelt, swept through the Mohawk Valley in an auto caravan as part of the campaign of Frederick Davenport, Progressive Party candidate for Governor of New York State.

After a speaking stop in Herkimer, Roosevelt and his party headed east, arriving in Little Falls shortly after 10 a.m. *The Evening Times* reported, "A big crowd waited on the streets for the colonel as he left the auto and walked up the steps of the city theatre. There was a hearty cheering as was also the case when the former president appeared inside the theatre."

After speeches by Davenport and others, Roosevelt spoke from the theatre's stage. His speech and the Progressive Party platform in general was directed against the Republican and Democratic Party bosses and for improvements in the lives of working men and women.

Roosevelt said, in part: Our aim is to hitch government to life and, by so far as may be possible, to make government an aid to the betterment of social and industrial conditions. I know that no law can take the place of man's individual character. If a man has not the right stuff in him, no law can get it out. But law can help towards securing fair play and a square deal for every man. My interest in government is to aid in securing that square deal.

"We advocate a number of laws to secure social and industrial justice. We have no cures or panaceas. We believe we can take the next steps forward in making the conditions of life and labor a little fairer for the working man and women. We can take no steps at all as long as we permit government to be controlled by bosses and machines."

*The Evening Times* reporter noted that Roosevelt "seemed not to have fully recovered from his recent illness and acted as tho he might be feeling the strain of personal and public activity under which he has labored for so many years. Despite his condition, he spoke with fire and enthusiasm and struck responsive sparks in the audience that packed the auditorium of the theatre to the door."



Teddy Roosevelt speaks from his auto at Allter's, St. Johnsville.

Immediately after he finished speaking, Roosevelt headed for his automobile, grasping a few hands as he left the building. His auto moved off to a chorus of "Good-bye Teddy" from a group of neighborhood boys.

The autos headed east, arriving at Allter's corners (where Stewart's is today) St. Johnsville about 10:30 a.m. After being introduced by Village President Isaac E. Smith, Roosevelt spoke briefly from his car, surrounded by local residents on all sides and above him on a balcony of Allter's

store. His theme was that people should be wary of the old political parties and get rid of Albany party bosses Barnes and Murphy, who were in collusion with one another.

The *St. Johnsville Enterprise* said that “Prof. Davenport was the more impressive of the two. Col. Roosevelt is evidently is unable to cope with outdoor activities at the present time.”

Roosevelt and party moved onward to Albany, making more quick stops like they had in Little Falls and St. Johnsville. Roosevelt’s effort for Davenport did not produce the desired results. Republican candidate Charles Whitman defeated Davenport and Democrat Martin H. Glynn in the November election. Roosevelt chose not to run as the Progressive Party candidate for president in 1916 and the party faded away.

### F.D.R also spoke at Allter’s

Another Roosevelt spoke at Allter’s, when Teddy’s distant cousin Franklin D. Roosevelt, then governor of New York, stopped his car there in the fall of 1930 and made a brief address. Roosevelt spoke on farm relief and the need for a \$50 million bond issue for prisons and to care for the insane. He also mentioned cost savings to counties from repeal of the farm tax and increase in revenue from the automobile tax. Lieutenant (and future) Governor Herbert Lehman, and Congressional candidate Izetta Miller of Schenectady also spoke to the crowd.

Allter’s circle (or corners) underwent big changes in the spring of 1930. The old store was razed to make room for a new Shell gas station operated by Arthur Turpin of Herkimer and Wilbur Ropeter of St. Johnsville. The Van Gorder Brothers later took over the business which, in turn was razed and replaced by a Stewart’s convenience store / gas station.

## *Call for Papers / Panels*

The Association of Public Historians of New York State (APHNYS) is pleased to announce that the 2019 Annual State Conference will be held in Albany, NY September 9-11, 2019. The conference planning committee is currently accepting proposals for conference presentations such as papers, panels & interactive programs. The time allowed for presentations/panels will be 1 hour & 15 minutes (incl. Q & A). APHNYS does not pay for speakers. We hope that all who submit proposals will think of sharing your information with New York State’s appointed historians, etc.

APHNYS members are also interested in proposals that offer:

- Insights into the history of counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, & Washington, their communities, businesses, & people
- History from throughout New York State including communities, businesses, & people
- Heritage Tourism from throughout New York State
- Transportation & Trades from throughout New York State
- Ideas and Techniques on celebrating any upcoming historical anniversaries throughout NYS such as 100th Anniversary of the American Legion being chartered by Congress (Sept. 16, 1919), 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NYS Historians’ Law, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of APHNYS, and any other anniversaries being celebrated in 2019.
- Skills and Techniques for Local Government Historians and Family History Researchers
- Preservation, maintenance, gravestone artwork, what not to do in copying gravestones, and other information about cemeteries
- Exhibit Design: travelling exhibits, less expensive exhibits, small space exhibits, etc.
- Other history topics related to New York State

Proposals due April 30, 2019 – can send electronically in PDF format to [aphnys@yahoo.com](mailto:aphnys@yahoo.com).

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